



1982

The Canon, [Fall 1982]

Dordt College

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Cannon

The Death of Another Salesman

*I worked real hard to sell the word
Amidst the lost and stumbling herd
That habitates this world, Absurd.*

*I knew my product very well
And was quite sure that it would sell.
"You people need it, I can tell."*

*I knew the words that buzzed and rang.
"You too can have success," I sang
So loud they called me Mister Clang.*

*With that I fell down to the ground
And realized something quite profound:
My methods clearly were not sound.*

*I knew my task had become a blur
When I'd neglected to confer
With my office manager.*

*Praying he'd be sort of nice
And not make me a sacrifice,
I turned to him for some ad-vice.*

*"Can I sell more— just on the whole?
Can I achieve a higher goal
And sell more folks, heart, mind, and soul?"*

*He spoke with startling quietness,
"I think you've found the wrong address;
I simply do not sell success."*

*"In fact my son, we do not sell
Anything; you can tell—
I do not compete with the methods of hell."*

Mike Brands
So./English, Theatre Arts

Kitty and mitten poetry

*skips across
the paper*

*Telling you nothing
you
didn't
know
before.*

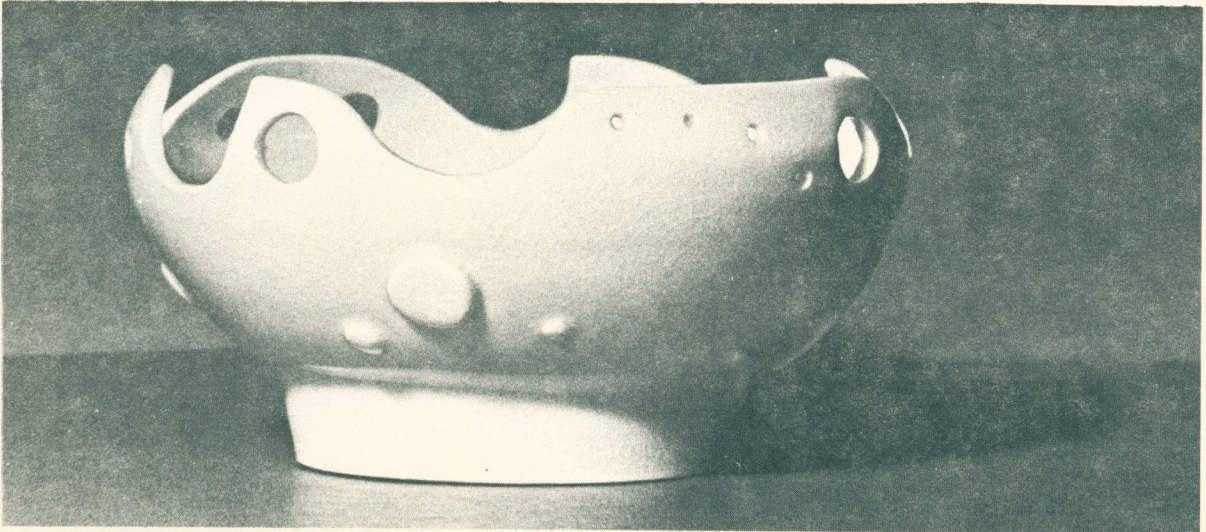
It bounces with no amazing profundity

*Tumbles and rolls with carefree
abandon.*

*Modally speaking. . .
where would you place it?*

Mary Woudenberg
Jr./Art

Wendy Dykstra
Jr./English



From Lake Michigan: A Letter Home to Iowa

White-edged water
 spits misty spray across the pier
 mixes with the sky
 in turbulent gathering night;
Sitting on the beach,
 barefoot and windblown,
 I hear the grind of spinning sand
 as waves push push
 and follow themselves onto shore,
and I think of you
 in that flat hot country
 where the sun has not yet set
 navigating machinery
 through rippling rows of corn
 day after day
 night after night.
The foghorn bellows,
 solid in the shifting splashing dark
and a beacon shines
 to guide the sailors home.
The headlights of your tractor cab
 will be far away and dim to me tonight.

Laura Apol
So./English

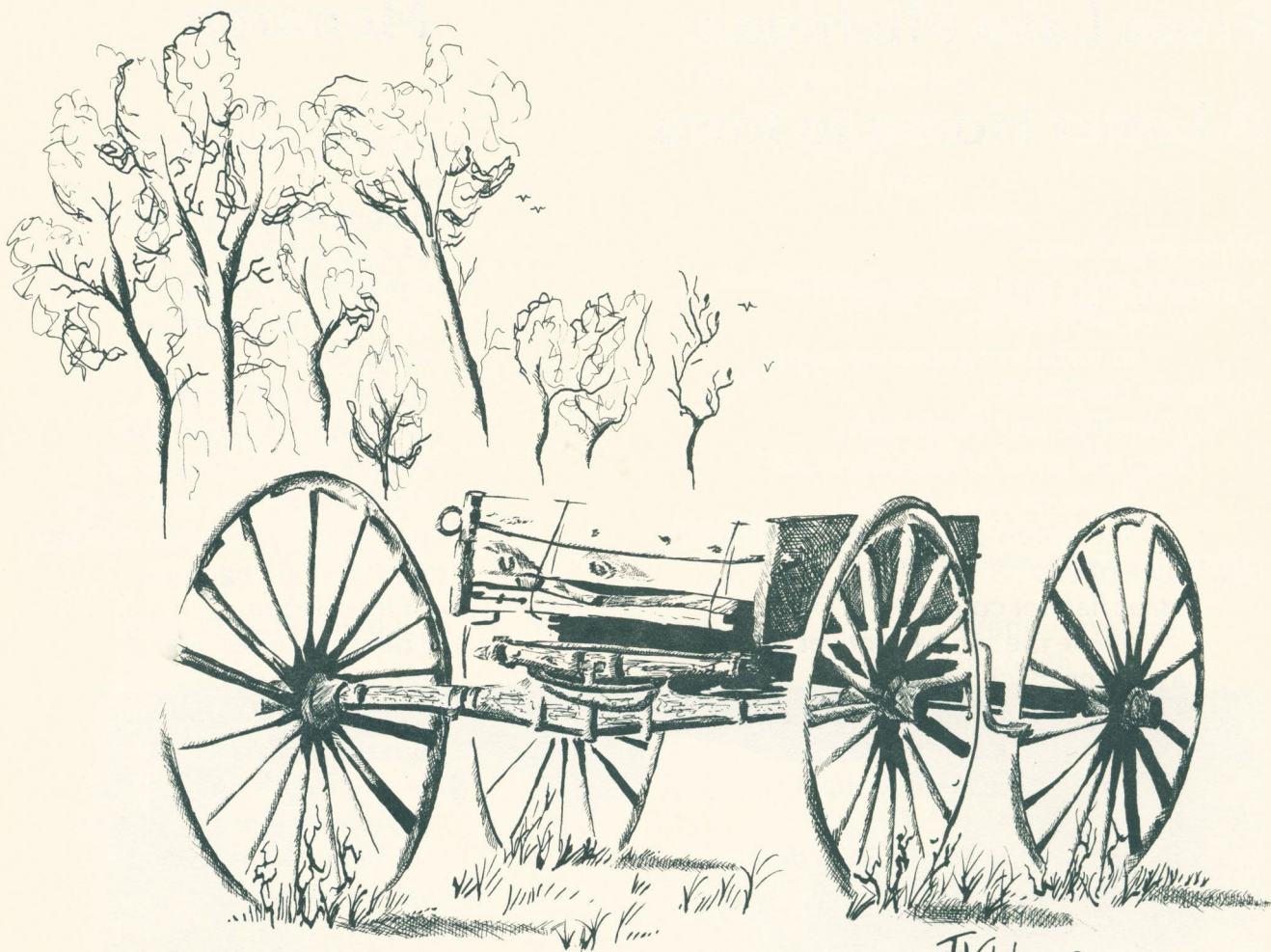
Monarch

My choice this morning:

Among flickering tongues
of autumn, half
hidden in the ruins
of a summer's lawn
a monarch
stiff as an old hinge
but pushing against the
winter sky; beating back
the crush of iron with wings
not cocoon-fresh but brilliant
for the straining calm
of its courage.
I bent and lifted the
dimming flame, pooling
the oil of my warmth,
but the monarch
wrenched his bright wings
from my hands three times
wresting fading strength
from ebbing color.

I walked on,
fingers stiffening in the cold.

Lynnette Pennings
Sr./English



J. Veltkamp
'82

John Veltkamp
Jr./Music, Art

After the Harvest

*Watching the fall, under unwavering sun,
Proud machines threshing out earth's yearly toil
Seed and weed after dormant wait awaken,
These, the seed changed, now reborn from soil.*

*One elder mutters that the neighbor's field
Is sparse, and weedy, and bears a weaker fruit
And he weekly called, and to a different alter stirs,
"Don't he, on the Lord's day bear a shabby suit?"*

*The fashioned fence, between the neighbor's lot
And ours, is more than a barrier of lands,
Still, do not coarse weeds surge from our sacred ground
And can we curse the thorns that bleed all hands?*

*When this year's tired harvest is reaped and stored
And we, judging a worker's fertile stand
I think, from whom will be reaped the greater yields —
Clean seed, or soiled see, in the weedless land?*

Don Huizinga
So./English, History

vivaciously

Awake!

Words adapted from Isaiah 52:1-6.
Music by Bert Sluys.

A handwritten musical score for the hymn 'Awake!'. The score is written on six systems of staves, each consisting of a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The music is written in a simple, accessible style with many chords and some melodic lines. The lyrics are written below the staves. The score includes the following lyrics: 'Awake! Your strength wear. Never again your sins you must bear.' The music is marked 'vivaciously' at the beginning. There are some handwritten annotations above the staves, including 'G/A', 'A', 'D', 'F#m', 'B', 'B7', and 'E7'. The score is written on aged, slightly yellowed paper.

Awake! Your strength wear. Never again your sins you must bear.

Handwritten musical score for the first system. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The melody is written on a single staff with a treble clef, and the accompaniment is on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The lyrics are: "Take off your bonds, shake off the dust. Clap and sing for joy you must. From". Above the melody, the following chords are written: F#m, B, C#, and F#m.

Handwritten musical score for the second system. The key signature remains two sharps. The melody continues with the lyrics: "sin you've been set free. You've been forgiven, a captive set free." Above the melody, the following chords are written: G, D, Em7, A, G, D, and A.

Handwritten musical score for the third system. The key signature remains two sharps. The melody has a 3rd time ending. The lyrics are: "1. With no money you were sold. 2. Many people mock God's Name." Above the melody, the following chords are written: G, A, G, and Em. The 3rd time ending is marked with a bracket and the chord Em. The final chord is Bm.

Handwritten musical score for a hymn, featuring three systems of music. The key signature is D major (two sharps). The time signature is 7/8.

System 1:

- Chords: A, Em⁷, A, G
- Lyrics: - You're redeemed with none. / Through God forgiveness now unfolds / Through the Father's
- Sub-lyrics: His love is not adored. / They think He treats all not the same. / Now thus says the

System 2:

- Chords: A, F#m, D, G, A, D.C.
- Lyrics: Son, / For on a cross the debt was paid / Not again need it be made.
- Sub-lyrics: Lord: / "My children will know I am here. / It will fill their hearts with cheer.

System 3:

- Chords: G, A, G, D, A, 4. A
- Lyrics: oh - clap your hands, sing for joy. / You have been set free! / free!

The score includes a piano accompaniment on the bottom staff of each system, with various chordal textures and melodic lines.

*I squirm
and try to
wiggle out
of your reach.*

No Escape “for such a worm as I”

Thriesa Hubers
Sr./English

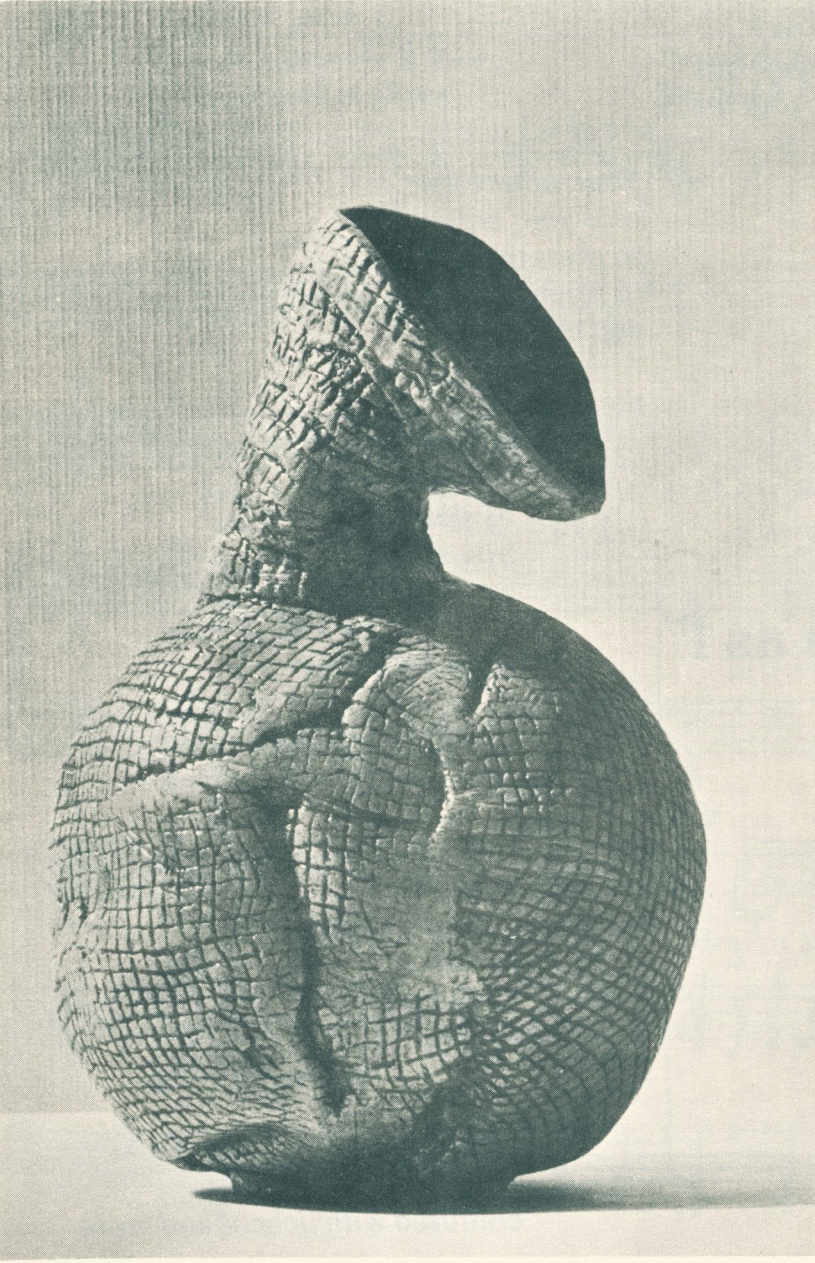
*Your vulture eye
tells your brain
to press the claws
to reach out
and enclose,*

*then,
let me hang
and swing
as slowly,
you ascend
to devour
my flexing form
from the heights.*

*I become worthless —
ugly — as my companions.*

*or,
let me drop
and smash
as nobly,
you decide
to ignore
my meagre being.*

*On the rocks
I become another lump
confused with lichens and moss.*



Mary Woudenberg
Jr./Art

Grave Digger

*Ask me not how
long I've tended these grounds, or how
many souls I've put to rest within this soil.
Ask me not their names.
As me not where they were born, what
they did, or other such trite statistics.*

*Only feel as I do
the shovel's rough wooden handle,
the weight of worm-rich earth,
the ache of labouring muscle
that has buried a generation.
Smell the living sod broken
for their final peace.
Hear the ravens cry.
Taste salty sweat mingled with black dirt.
Dig
as I dig in silence,
and learn to understand.*

Jeff Alons
So./Theatre Arts

More Hidden Glory

*There's more of glory hidden here to see;
But death's bent sign, dark prism warp our sight.
Oh God, bestow your light — set Grandpa free.*

*I sat in Solomon's court on Grandpa's knee;
Now my guitar must sing of David's fight —
There's more of glory hidden here to see.*

*He dreamed of when I'll follow Timothy,
But will my pulpit ever meet his eyes?
Oh God, bestow your light — set Grandpa free.*

*I pray my son can sip my grandma's tea
While Grandpa teaches him with wise delight:
There's more of glory hidden here to see.*

*Make Grandpa's life my lasting legacy,
But never just a shadow in the night.
Oh God, bestow your light — set Grandpa free.*

*The future earth will last eternally;
We walk this earth just once to wage your fight.
There's more of glory hidden here to see —
God bestowed his light; Grandpa's free.*

Mike Brands
So./English, Theatre Arts



the calm before

afternoon, June 30

A dip in the irrigation pond
concluded a stroll through
the fields
of knee-high barley, full alfalfa,
sprinkling pipe, and healthy mosquitoes.

An energetic water fight in the garden
was concluded by a proud farmer's words,
"Enough of that playing around!
I want this yard kept in
tip-top shape and
don't need a hose
dragged through the flowers
by some goof-off. I don't want
to see any of that messing around
again this summer!"

stormy celebration

-noon, July 1

clouded skies touch earth
downcast eyes suspect heaven
of darkness
on earth.

heaven's whims rattle earth
earth's fears reach heaven
as curses.

empty nests
bare trees
torn gardens

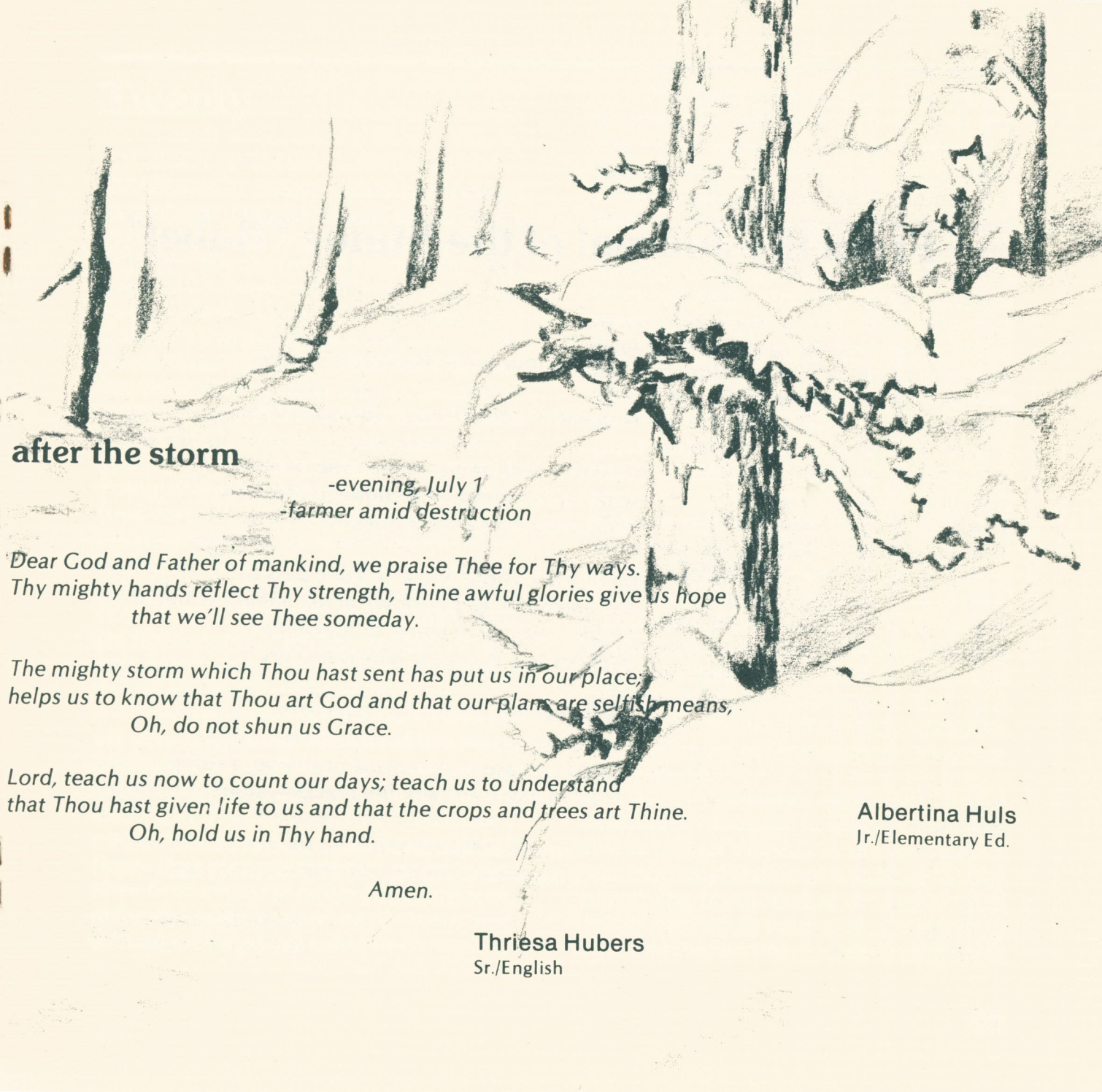
pounded crops
broken fences
twisted pipe

shattered glass
dented buildings
broken hinges

ruined homes
lost power
beaten man.

sky's clouds leave earth
earth's eyes question heaven.

insurance pays.



after the storm

-evening, July 1

-farmer amid destruction

*Dear God and Father of mankind, we praise Thee for Thy ways.
Thy mighty hands reflect Thy strength, Thine awful glories give us hope
that we'll see Thee someday.*

*The mighty storm which Thou hast sent has put us in our place;
helps us to know that Thou art God and that our plans are selfish means,
Oh, do not shun us Grace.*

*Lord, teach us now to count our days; teach us to understand
that Thou hast given life to us and that the crops and trees art Thine.
Oh, hold us in Thy hand.*

Amen.

Thriessa Hubers
Sr./English

Albertina Huls
Jr./Elementary Ed.

From the Journal of the Statue “Babel”

From the Journal of the Statue “Babel”

i cry with Abel’s blood in this city, Babel.

*the Fears look at me—curse and pane me in
with voided insight—a clique of Mannequin
fashioning lives around success’s fable.*

*on rare occasions Seeds of Love pass by,
but one quick glance down at my name’s scared pride
builds a wall from panes of homicide—
it lets us see, though it is deaf to a cry.*

*i yell advice at them; No One hears. . .
the echoes haunt and hurt, encased in fears.
i stand on base not knowing my name, a stone
afriad to move and risk life cracks—alone.*

*i smash the pane and burn the frost of doubt,
a deadman come to life and reaching out.*

Mike Brands

So./English, Theatre Arts

Twenty

I was only twenty years old when I owned my very own pure white, stock industrial van—yet to be modified to a finished touch for the Truck-In, that weekend. I lived at home with my folks with no rent to pay and I worked for a grinding wheel manufacturer. The money was right on. I had bills to pay but they could wait as long as people do in the unemployment lines today. That white van of mine was purchased only a couple of months before the Ottawa Young Peoples Rally, (an event which took place each year to get all the young peoples together to have fun) an event where my van, fully modified, could be seen by all. It was at this rally where a cool dude with a billfold loaded with greens hanging from the pocket of ripped denim jeans, became a soft gentle person veiled in swaddling clothes.

The weekend of that rally started off very unexciting. The dance that was normally held each year tuned up to the sound of three digit hymnal numbers. No flock of blond beauties was to be seen; no hustle and boogy on the gymnasium floor. That place of rapture was no more alive than a funeral parlor full of persons dressed in black, wading in tears and drinking some cheap cold punch.

That boring atmosphere had led me to think for awhile and to predict the rest of the activities for that weekend. I had asked a friend of mine if he wanted to find a place where we could down a Blue or two. We hopped into my seventy-six Ford Econoline and like smooth running paint spilled over to Vetere's. Once we were there we began to discuss some ways we could liven up the weekend; come to games drunk, make fun of people, or walk in the church with a beer. My friend wasn't all for it, but he gave me a brief rundown of the special guest speakers. One particular name stirred around in my mind because of his position on the Young Calvinist Federation (YCF) board and his position as editor of *Insight Magazine*. For a young Dutchman in the Christian Reformed denomination, meeting him in person would be like saying hello to the Prime Minister of Canada. After pitching back the last bit of alcohol from our glasses—an act prolonged by one cigarette—we lurched to the counter to add a bit more to Labatt's fine . . . brr-urp, ailing profits.

As I stepped outside of the restaurant I thought to myself how hard it was to find Vetere's in the daylight. It was now nightfall and I walked to my van trying to remember if I had turned left or right when I came into the parking lot and whether I had passed two sets of

lights, or only one before turning on to the main drag. I pulled and lifted the heavy white door to make sure it was shut and stabbed the key into the ignition. I paused for a moment to wait for my friend to take his seat and turned to him and asked if he had ever met or seen Rev. Lont in the past. He seemed to ignore my question and I didn't bother to ask him again. I slammed the gas pedal down with my right foot and the clutch with my left foot like a boxer dodging punches while I fought the stickshift, which seemed to please itself as we bounced off the curb and headed nowhere.

I finally hit the sack that night and before falling asleep I asked one of my bedroom mates what activities were to go on the next day. A narrowed down view of the subject matter spelled out 'exasperation': who in his right mind could attend four Bible discussions in one day?

Something was bugging me as I turned another ditto copy of the next morning's Bible discussion. I mean, what could be more soul-stirring than an arousing talk about love? It was eleven o'clock and I had not seen Rev. Lont's face anywhere. I began to think that maybe he'd show up at the Sunday service, but that was too far away for me to sit around and wait. The Bible leader heralded an 'amen' to end the discussion

and everyone stormed out of the room, some yelling, "Food, food," or, "save a place for me Henry, Dick, or Jane."

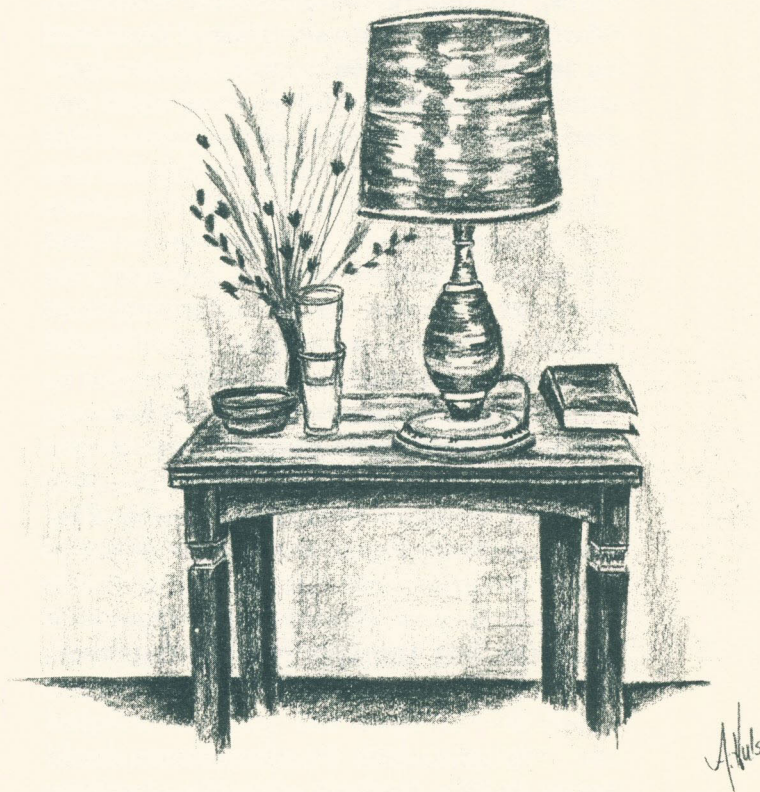
The sports activities that day opened up many opportunities for observing women. The soccer fields were covered with halter tops and leaping legs that could win any Miss Universe contest. I watched most of the time from the hood of my van with music blaring so some other outsiders could hear their favorite tunes at their request. The yelling and screaming that built up halfway through the game began to sound like a nursery full of teething babies. With this going on I started up my van and left the parking lot creating a dust bowl for all to see. I went for a cruise around Ottawa that day and missed two of the four Bible discussions; making only the fourth one on time.

The once blue sky was eventually coated over by a purple hue like a blanket covering a baby. A darkness crept in and again I lay in my legless bed gazing at the design on the rug that was made up of dozens of repeated circular formations. I dared not to speak to anyone that night for fear they might find out I had missed the number two and three Bible discussions and before long the word would be out that Benny was bad this weekend. Curious as I was I asked if anyone had seen Lont floating around anywhere. Neither of the boys

had seen his face yet, hinting to the effect that he would show up eventually.

Sunday morning rolled around signalling the end of another wasted weekend. It was straight home after the service for me while the other people would greet one another with "dag" (meaning hello in dutch), and later coffee kletz for two hours. At the same time they would meet some elderly persons of the church to give a good impression. A guest minister from Nova Scotia had spoken that morning on the topic of "Loving Your Neighbor" and afterwards encouraged everyone to participate in a discussion downstairs in the basement of the church. Everyone sat in a circle as the minister (name unknown) waited patiently for anyone to comment or question about his sermon. The guys who dressed in three piece suits with obvious signs of maturity hanging from their noses were the ones who aroused the attention of the dutch blonds. To come off as an intelligent man each one would inject a statement that to me made no more sense than a joke from a Bazooka Joe comic strip, but which to them sounded theologically heavy.

I thought it different, but interesting to have the young peoples group involved with the service that way and was pulled into staying for the evening service by an older young person. He came from Montreal and was on



Albertina Huls
Jr./Elementary Ed.

the YCF board. He knew Rev. Lont very well and asked me if I was enjoying the weekend. With my face turned away trying to ignore his presence I replied, "Sort of." He then asked me if I wanted to join him and Rev. Lont for dinner. I didn't know Ron Milton that well nor had I ever seen Rev. Lont before and yet he asked me to have dinner with the two of them. The thing that really killed me was that they were both prominent and devoted members of the church, but they were going to a restaurant and spend money on a Sunday. I told Ron I had no money and needed what I had to pay for gas to get back home. He was kind, and willing enough to pay for my meal. I didn't refuse and was on my way to the Pondersa Steakhouse with Rev. Lont catching up to us after speaking to some people. I felt at the time I was going to be introduced to the Queen of England, but thought, "What the heck, he's only a normal person like everyone else."

We sat in the Pondersa restaurant, Ron and Rev. Lont on one side of a four-person booth and I on the other side, like someone ready to go through an interrogation. My speech wasn't fluent and my clothes accented a slobbishness, especially addressing a figure like Rev. Lont. He was a humorous character with a bald scalp that stretched from his forehead over his global top and half-way down the back of his head. His

stock character gave him the appearance of a Dutch farmer with a gray tint in his huge bozo-looking sideburns. After our meal my body was more relaxed and I was looking forward to hearing Rev. Lont speak that evening on the topic of 'Loving Christ.' I began to feel better about the weekend now that I had met Rev. Lont and for the first time in a long time I was looking forward to going to church. I tried for the rest of that day to fit in the crowd and talked to people of all ages.

The evening broke out with a singsong as I scouted for a backrow seat so I could watch the different people walking in. Reluctantly I ended up seated beside a girl whose brown hair and eyes had attracted me for quite some time! Her attractiveness and her presence beside me now was less dominant than that of Rev. Lont. Staring most assuredly toward the front of the church, hands clasped between my legs onto the bench, I waited for the minister to tell us to rise for the greeting. My eyes were focused straight ahead grazing through an overlap of ears and shoulders that form capital 'I's and 'T's in space. There was a dead silence over the whole congregation as my hands slowly rubbed against each other to remove the build-up of sweat in the pockets of my palms. I knew that something was either wrong about staying or that something good was going to happen in connection with

talking to Rev. Lont that evening. I tried to think of many different reasons for my strange behavior.

I sat motionless for the whole service except the times when all of us stood up to sing. The sermon was blocked from my mind as I waded through the crowd to make my way downstairs to join in fellowship and to drink some coffee like everyone else. Sitting in a circle just like that morning all the young people were reluctant to say anything about the sermon. There was a silence in the white-structured room just as a crowd watching a tight rope waiting for the trapeze artist to make a mistake and fall. Suddenly the stiffness broke into a paralysis when Rev. Lont asked if anyone there had ever made love. Those formally dressed, clean shaven purist boys who were so fluent with their tongues at the morning session now sat perplexed and startled by such a real question. I felt at ease now and raised my arm as carefully as someone might raise a mast on a sailboat. Once my arm was full mast and my hand spread like a sail, all eyes in the circle turned to me like a strong wind ready to capsize an honest sailor. Rev. Lont came at me like a huge tidal wave by exclaiming, "You've never made love—you might have made sexual intercourse, but you've never made love because God is Love and you cannot make God!" Lowering my arm as slow as

I had raised it I began to feel a drowning sensation as my head ducked away between my legs like an ostrich in the sand.

The session was over and I felt a magnetic pull towards the man who sank a cool dude who thought he had all the experience. I trusted Rev. Lont like a brick wall and felt I could tell him anything, and every next reply would be more positive than the previous one. Shaking as a six-foot, skinny twenty-year-old, fighting to save his life after an ice cold swim, I willfully told Rev. Lont my life's history in thirty seconds.

Rev. Lont couldn't help watching me shake. He had even asked my why I was acting the way I was and I replied, "oh,...oh,...oh,...may,...ay,...ay...be it's just nerves I guess." He looked down at me and smiled putting his hand on my shoulder as though to stop me from shaking and answered, "That isn't nerves working inside of you, but the works of the Holy Spirit." By this time I felt like a helpless fish on the edge of butcher's block ready to be beheaded. I left without a word, thinking about what Rev. Lont had said about the Holy Spirit. That evening another person who felt the same way I did asked me to help her. I repeated the same things Rev. Lont had told me, preaching like a prophet. The remainder of the evening became more confusing than ever. I was not aware of the fact that maybe Christ was knocking at the back door of my

van—a place where I stayed quite often.

The last evening of the weekend came to a close, like a treasure chest on the bottom of the ocean's depth all locked up and sealed shut, with *mysteries packed inside*. I lay inside that treasure chest of darkness and prayed that evening for the first time—with meaning. Rev. Lont had told me to tell Christ all the things that I had told him at the church; those things God accepted. I felt all tightened up and struggled to escape from that treasure chest with the words, "God...take...take my life, for...give me for all that I..have done,...the drinking,...the smoking up,....." Without anymore said I prayed that He might take my life into His command and suddenly my body broke into hot sweltering coals which then found an exit through my feet and a warm feeling of security wrapped itself inside of me. God had answered my prayer that night four years ago and we still talk with each other today.

Ben Luttjeboer

Sr./Elementary Ed., Theatre Arts



**Kurt Kuipers
Jr./Engineering**

Enemy

*I saw the enemy last morning.
He stood no more than three feet away
facing me,
gun in hand, grenades
dangling below his belt—
two of them.
His mouth hung open loosely,
white froth and spittle leaking from the corner.
Apathy and fatigue oozed
from his pale, cold eyes.
He was ugly.
But an uglier question
has been eating at my liver since then:
What was he doing with my face?*

*Strangely, he didn't kill me,
though he wants to.
And I can't kill him.
Someone else will have to.*

Jeff Alons
So./Theatre Arts

Kurt Kuipers
Jr./Engineering



A Change of Freedoms

*When a child, at meal-time devotions
before and after the meal we chanted
"Lord bless. . ." and "Lord we thank. . ."
And father's dark, flashing eyes at
the soul who would err*

*And sometimes, looking
Yes, peeking through my hands
during prayer I could see
Ohnoyou sister with your eyes open, studying your nails
Ohwhy you brother, looking down, rubbing your calloused hands
But, I could say
Nothing*

*Yes
then the change
You decided you could pull us from
our mumbled prayers
(we were so proud)*

*Our hands clenched at first
would later relax and we
mellowed from the excitement of a new experiment
Yes. . . .*

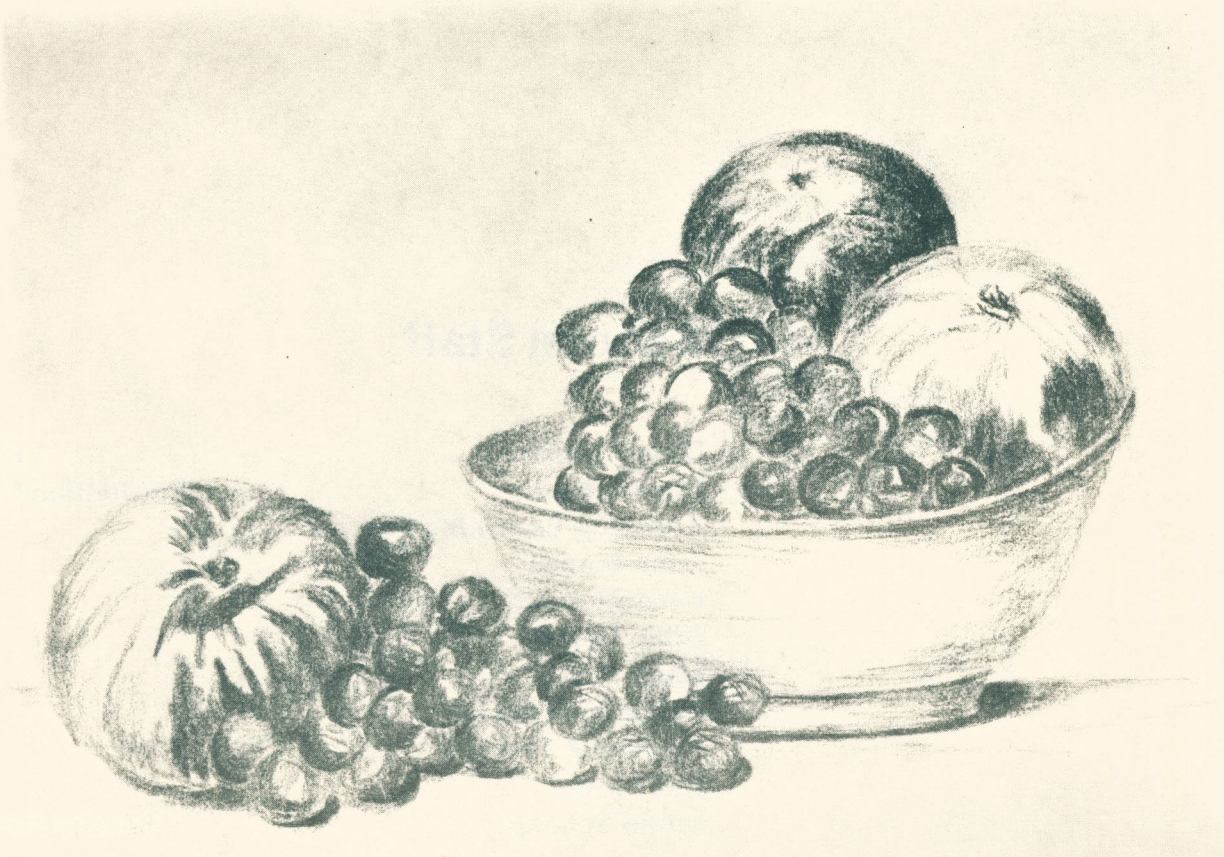
*We too got older
and in age our minds well
they do travel down different avenues
off to what we truly willed to pray about
even if*

it was not really prayable

*Only then we knew that being weaned from childhood, maybe
wasn't grown-up but grown-in
and not a phase to be proud of
but prepared unwilling heart for
a more seasoned change.*

Don Huizinga
So./English, History

Albertina Huls
Jr./Elementary Ed.



CANNON

Vol. 13 No. 1

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